The Middlebury College Carillon

In 1918, the family of former Vermont governor John Mead gave Middlebury's Chapel a chime of eleven bells made by the Meneely Company of Watervliet, New York. The Meneely family members were direct descendants of Paul Revere, the national hero of the War of Independence and a famous silversmith, who was also a bronze bell caster.

In 1986, through the generosity of then President of the Board of Trustees of the College Allen Dragone '50 and his wife Jane, the chime was expanded to a full carillon of 48 bells (four octaves) by Paccard et Fils Fonderie des Cloches in Annecy le-Vieux in southeastern France.

Middlebury's heaviest bell weights 2,300 pounds, roughly the same weight as the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Its pitch is E in the middle octave.

In 2001, twelve bells were recast or replaced by Meeks, Watson and Company, bell founders and carillon builders in Georgetown, Ohio.

A carillon clavier is set up like a keyboard, with black and white batons and foot pedals that are hit with fists, fingers, and feet. Each baton and pedal is connected by wire to a bell clapper. Different bells are mechanically rung depending on the baton or pedal that is struck.

Middlebury College's carillon is one of 183 carillons in the United States, 71 of them in colleges or universities, and of some 750 carillons worldwide.

It is a 75-step climb to the carillon booth high up in the spire of the Middlebury Chapel, the highest point on campus.

Middlebury College Presents

A CELEBRATION AND RECITAL
marking the
1000th LUNCHTIME CARILLON CONCERT

George Matthew, Jr.
College Carillonneur

Thursday, April 23, 2026
12:30-1:30 PM

Meet George Matthew on the Chapel steps at 12:15 PM
Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont

A Short Biography of George Matthew, Jr.

George Matthew, Jr. has been carillonneur of Middlebury College and Norwich University in Vermont since 1985. A church organist since the age of 13, he is currently Organist of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Middlebury, Vermont.

Mr. Matthew has made 36 carillon concert tours of the US and 13 of Europe, performing in Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, France, England, Ireland, Scotland, and Russia. In 2005 he played two concerts on the new carillon of the St. Petersburg Cathedral. He was the first American to play carillon in Russia. He has also played organ recitals in the New York and New England area.

Mr. Matthew has composed and arranged about 100 pieces for carillon, including several ragtime piano works. His European debut was with a rather unusual all-ragtime program performed in Ostend, Belgium.

A member of the Carillonneur Guild since 1980, Mr. Matthew has served on the Carillon Directory Committee, the Student Advancement Committee, and the Bell Founding in America Committee (of which he was chairman). He made the US presentation in Zutphen, the Netherlands, for the World Carillon Federation in 1990. In 2004, Mr. Matthew was named Artist of the Year by the Vermont Chapter American Guild of Organists.

Mr. Matthew has studied carillon with Arthur Bigelow and Frank Law; organ with Hugh Ross and Ernest White; and composition with David Barnett. He is a graduate of Columbia, Bridgeport, and Wesleyan Universities.

Mr. Matthew teaches free carillon lessons to students interested in the instrument.

Recital Program

Organ Sonata #7	George Frideric Handel (German-English 1685–1759)
Variations on a Flemish Song	Wendell J. Wescott (American, 1911–2010)
Fantasia on a Flemish Song	Frederick Llewelyn Marriott (American, 1901–1989)
Serenade	Henry Schumacher Wesson (American, 1896–1964)

An anthology of traditional Ukrainian, Afghani, and Hispanic music and spirituals